The Sabotage of Public Diplomacy and Failure of the U.S. in Mexico, 1918

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Cambridge
Scholars
Publishing

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This book first published 2024

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Lady Stephenson Library, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2PA, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN (10): 1-5275-5282-9
ISBN (13): 978-1-5275-5282-1

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

I

In relationships between sovereign political entities, the practice of public diplomacy is relatively recent. The first clear, formal, strategic attempt occurred in the early 20th century during a period of international and intranational conflict. To manage both internal relations with its own citizens and external relations with other countries, the United States government sought to generate and maintain sympathy for its international policies. Internal support for those policies was also a goal of the campaign, but diplomacy concerns relations with other sovereign entities. Therefore, this work disregards internal efforts except as they relate to external efforts to influence directly the people of other countries. The period of concern is the era of World War I, then known as the Great War, and the simultaneous Mexican Revolution that began in 1910 and continued through the duration of the Great War. Both the internal circumstances in Mexico and historic European and U.S. involvement in Mexico required the United States to seek an innovative approach to influence. The result was a campaign utilizing techniques that later became part of the emerging field of public relations. Because the objective was to effect advantageous relations directly with the people of another sovereign political entity, the campaign was the early example of what has become known as public diplomacy.

The practice differs from propaganda, which is associated with negative attributes. In the strictest sense, propaganda is spreading an attitude, viewpoint, interpretation or complete paradigm to those who do not conform. Almost all strategic communication falls within that definition. However, propaganda has become associated with the broad objective of paradigm change among an adversarial population. Effective propaganda elicits an alteration of psychological commitment to the detriment of a previous affiliation or sympathy. To effect that change, the originator uses any means or methods available. Tools such as falsehoods, deceptions, fabrications and mis-directions are as valid as truth, which the originator only uses when it will achieve the strategic goal. Though most commonly considered as a

strategy for use between foreign societies, propaganda also has its use within a society for establishing, maintaining and strengthening dedication and commitment. When executed internally, propaganda forms social and national identity. Externally, propaganda presents national identity and asserts a dominant relationship with another society to weaken the dedication and commitment to their own identity.

Public diplomacy resembles propaganda because of certain common characteristics. Both are directed across international borders to mass audiences. Therefore, both utilize techniques and forms of mass communication. The chief techniques are persuasive; they endeavor to induce the target population to accept the communication as actual information about the originating country. Although the goal of either can be to change current perceptions about the originator, public diplomacy can also be a tool for strengthening current perceptions and attitudes as a defense against propaganda from another source. Distinction between the two can be cloudy because the most effective propaganda has the appearance of public diplomacy. Each uses the symbols and communication channels most likely to evoke the desired effect in the target population. Both practices attempt to circumvent control by local political authorities. Yet public diplomacy may seek the endorsement of political leaders and influencers. The strategic goals are similar in that both set out to produce acceptance of information favorable to the originator while convincing the target population that the information is also favorable to it. But propaganda also tries to extend an ideology likely to be disadvantageous to the prevailing political regime. Propaganda generates dissatisfaction, dissonance and disruption within the existing social and political system while public diplomacy builds and strengthens a relationship with the system.

Even the most sophisticated campaigns based on a well-developed and established set of best practices cannot guarantee the achievement of desired results. When sophistication, practical development and established best practices are absent, success derives from a strong intuitive sense of the practitioner, from accident or from a mixture of both. In circumstances of an innovative approach, a practitioner must be open-minded about the causes of success or failure. The earliest use of public diplomacy by the United States government entailed untested, and in some ways untestable, procedures to achieve a poorly articulated goal. Expertise in the area of public communication was also unsophisticated and based on assumptions that later turned out to be false. Under such circumstances, failure might seem inevitable. But certain elements in tactical execution, by their nature, can elicit the desired effects even if at a much lower level than what is desired. The tendency to do what has been done before influences all but the

most clearly innovative practices. The foundation of public diplomacy emerges from Enlightenment ideals, but the root of practical application is in self-interested pragmatism. Whether idealism or pragmatism dominates the strategy determines the character of tactical execution and effectiveness.

The pioneering campaign in public diplomacy occurred in 1918 shortly before the conclusion of the Great War and before the consolidation of the Mexican Revolution that had begun eight years earlier. The circumstances, rather than any political insight, determined the initiation of an innovative approach. Public diplomacy did not supplant traditional formal diplomacy. Each was a separate and independent process. The lack of integration meant that each tended to subvert the other. Because the Mexican government had yet to be substantially consolidated, the United States directed diplomatic communication and influence to the Mexican people. Simultaneously, the apparently prevailing Mexican political faction was the target of formal diplomatic communication. Although the United States government preferred one of the Mexican factions, the government had not recognized any formally, instead waiting for clear dominance at least commitment to co-operation among factions. A strategic initiative intercepted from one of the European belligerents compelled the United States to act, and they recognized their preferred faction. From that point, both traditional and public diplomacy took place, creating conflict in the US administration. Traditional diplomacy took its traditional forms. Public diplomacy used forms of direct public communication as well as indirect forms that have become associated with public relations.

II

The Mexican revolution had many causes, but one of them was international economic relations. The country has abundant natural resources and substantial social resources. Development in the last quarter of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th heavily depended on the primary sector, the extractive industries and agriculture. As was also the case in other Hispanic American countries, Mexico lacked sufficient capital to develop rapidly. Government policy favored foreign investment to accelerate the development pace. Once established, foreign capital influenced domestic policy to their advantage, turning to their own governments to exert political pressure when necessary. Secondary sector development of manufacturing also felt the dominance of foreign investment. The growing Mexican middle class was frustrated with obstacles to inclusion in both the political and economic systems. The peasant agricultural workers and other primary sector workers were frustrated by land and labor policies that stifled

their ambitions and potential for improvement. The country was developing, but most of the population was not. Among the many results of the revolution was a rapid change in national policy in favor of local control and ownership, to the detriment of foreign capital investment and influence. Retarding and even reversing those political changes were the goals of the United States government in both traditional and public diplomacy.

The goal or objective was unified but the strategies and especially the tactics were distinct. The United States conducted private diplomacy through traditional channels according to traditional assumptions concerning relations between countries. The primary assumption was that the government for all intents and purposes is the country. Private diplomacy conforms to a standard and accepted content style through media that remain under the strict control of interacting governments. The receiving government could, and was even expected, to give direct response or feedback to the initiating government through the established channel. The strategies between private and public diplomacy had to diverge because fundamental assumptions, communication channels, character of the receivers and potential, even the necessity, for response and feedback all diverged. Public diplomacy assumed the validity of the Enlightenment notion of popular sovereignty and responsible government. Mexican independence was barely a century old, but independence movements throughout Hispanic America found their justifications in the same Enlightenment principles that justified had justified the independence of the North American states. They were a radical break from traditional assumptions and practice. Capacity to communicate simultaneously with a single message to a great number of receivers had emerged with technological advancements in media. The number of receivers was inversely related to the potential for response and feedback to the communication initiator. However, because of assumed mass media effects, response and feedback were not important. To publish was to persuade. Although research soon showed that assumption to be false, media had the reputation of powerful influence at that time.

Enlightenment ideology was the subject of the communication campaign through which the Unites States government targeted the Mexican people directly. The message was congruent with Mexican ideological thinking that was also based on Enlightenment principles. But though they could agree on broad, general policy, the practical character found different expressions in the two countries. The differing internal circumstances of either country entailed differing subordinate goals in executing the principles. The United States government was aware of the widely divergent social characters between the two countries, but assumed that cultural values were equivalent in both concerning the ideology of international relations. The two societies

could agree generally the ultimate goal of international peace and co-operation. But they disagreed on what appearances, forms and actions constitute peace and co-operation. They shared the theory but not the practice. In an actual sense, the difference was language, not just verbal language but also all social behaviors that distinguish one group from another. The challenge for the United States government was to discover the primary shared principle of the two societies and communicate it effectively to evoke recognition and elicit a sense of affinity toward the United States from the Mexican people.

National interest, private interest and convenience determined the character of private diplomacy. Enlightenment principles apply to the internal relations between a national government and its citizens. Traditional goals and practices of international relations apply between governments. Although the governments are public representatives, communications between them remain private. Neither of the interacting governments divulges communication content publicly except when it serves their mutual interest to release it as public communication. Co-operation and coercion are traditional subjects of private diplomacy. The relationship asserted can be symmetrical in which both countries regard each other as equals. In such relationships, coercion does not arise as an option. The commitment is to co-operation. A complimentary relationship asserts that one of the countries holds a capacity to dominate the subordinate. When the perceived subordinate rejects the assertion of inequality, the subject of potential coercion arises. Regarding Mexico and all other Hispanic American countries, United States governments have always asserted a complimentary relationship that they dominate. Hispanic Americans have regarded the Unites States as arrogant for making that assertion. The United States as regarded Hispanic American governments as arrogant for rejecting that assertion. In their private diplomacy with Mexico during the period of study, the United States government reiterated that assertion, often using a tone of belligerence and coercion while taking steps towards practical execution.

The merits of the policies are important only insofar as they determined the nature of the communications efforts. The question is whether the goals were suitable for the applications utilized. In the broadest sense, military force is a communication form. It communicates that a country asserts an active adversarial relationship with another to achieve a goal regardless of co-operation. The traditional ideology of single-sided national self-interest dominates. No form of communication can guarantee successful achievement of its goal. The use of military force as a communication form is no exception. Further, it is costly to both countries by its nature. Even the dominating country loses resources and productivity that could have

contributed to national wealth. To avoid such loss, the country that would be dominant wisely uses every communication form other than military force to persuade its adversary that it will prevail in any contest. In terms used by a prior government, the United States preferred speaking softly to carrying a big stick. The nature of public diplomacy was dominance without ostentation, which entailed keeping the big stick well hidden. Public diplomacy was a soft stick of public attitude to use against the Mexican government. The nature of private diplomacy was ostentatious dominance, speaking as softly as possible while reminding the Mexican government of the big stick. Public diplomacy was an innovation that departed from traditional practice. Engaging in such a departure, however, invited a response that also departed from traditional practice.

III

Diplomatic interaction is formal according to longstanding tradition. Every aspect conforms to a code recognized and understood by specific grammars not only of content but also of channel. Adherence to the code determines perceived diplomatic maturity, recognition and status. Violating the norms invites misunderstanding that can entail undesirable consequences. But a government may resort to strategic violation of diplomatic norms when another government uses those norms to disguise its true intentions to deceive or mislead. To be useful, any code must be able to lie. Content concerning the present situation to which both interacting parties are simultaneously oriented merely ratifies the symbolic system for relating the apparent phenomena. Any other content is potentially a lie. The past is not available for simultaneous verification, nor is the future. The subjunctive expression by definition is contrary to fact, and any conditional assertion based upon it is imaginary. Even assertions about a present state can be false when they are conceptual or abstract. The intentions or attitudes expressed by a government cannot be interpreted as true until concrete future evidence reveals them to be so according to the diplomatic code of international behavior. The purpose of the diplomatic code is to secure confidence in the meaning of diplomatic dialog and statement. But it does not and cannot guarantee that the conveyed meaning is true.

The diplomatic code dictates that only the formal governments of countries interact. The Enlightenment concepts of popular sovereignty and responsive and open governments notwithstanding, diplomatic communications are withheld from the citizenry. In the United States, diplomacy is specifically reserved to the executive branch of government. The separate and controlled channels of message delivery insure against scrutiny from

outside the involved governments. Further, the channels exclude internal government officials who are not involved in a particular interaction. The right hand often operates secretly and independently from the left hand. Content generation utilizes cryptic references and allusions to thwart the understanding among possible unintended receivers. Governments rely on each other to observe the code of secrecy as a demonstration of mutual respect and reciprocal confidence. A government may publish its international goals, intentions, actions or communications generally or specifically, but they withhold details except with the agreement of both parties. In traditional practice, only officials who tend to public affairs and who are involved in the daily interaction between governments have access to the unfiltered, original communications. That other governments, organizations and individuals attempt to gain access to message content is well known. The forms and channels of diplomatic code both hinder and facilitate the attempts. The knowledge of the methods of communication gives direction to efforts at interception. But nothing hinders a government from publishing diplomatic communication except national interest, which can also encourage a government to publish.

A number of influences put pressure on governments to open diplomatic interactions to public scrutiny and comment. Enlightenment principles may have dictated that the public be informed of all matters of government, for which they were ultimately responsible in theory. In practice, certain matters were delegated to governments at their sole discretion, although at least nominally on behalf of the people. The legitimacy of government action derives from the people, who increasingly demanded information about all public matters before they would acquiesce and confer legitimacy. Participation entails robust debate, which requires information. People expect to see evidence that government policy and action reflect their participation. Public opinion had become an important factor determining public policy both internal and external. Using industrial technology, public communication channels had substantially increased their dissemination capacity to hundreds of thousands daily. In supplying the voracious public demand for information, media could and did sacrifice accuracy and facts. The public opinion that put pressure on policy was based on rumor, hearsay and misinformation, perhaps not deliberate but misinformation nonetheless. Even with the resources of accurate, factual information, much of the public is unable to form a valid interpretation. Yet their opinion exerts influence on the government. For government to exert influence on public opinion has become imperative.

Public diplomacy as initially conceived was not a result or extension of democratic principles. Commitment to those principles did not guide its use

or determine its form. At that time, the communication sender was a government, and the receivers were the citizens of another country. A century later, the practice had transformed into a broader practice between citizens and organizations of one country to those of another country to affect public attitudes. The transformation began as citizens perceived the need to affect the perception of their country as being the people themselves rather than their government. This development is the more validly democratic definition of public diplomacy because it is diplomacy between international publics. But its first use between a government and the public of another country was a step away from traditional practice toward the eventual transformation in conformity with democratic principles. In some sense, democratic public diplomacy has always occurred through the interactions of travelers and other international visitors. But results were happenstantial except as it may have concerned commerce, trade and private economic interests. Like traditional diplomacy, public diplomacy is strategic or purposeful. It has goals that are more or less specific and observable so they can be evaluated. In general, the purpose is to condition the psychological orientation among publics of other countries to be favorably disposed toward a public of the initiating country. This was, in fact, the purpose of the initial attempt between the United States and Mexico. Instead of occurring between two international publics, however, it occurred between a government and a public.

This first effort was neither abrupt nor dramatic. The goal of the United States remained as formerly to influence the country of Mexico as a whole rather than to condition the public. Throughout the hemisphere and the world, the United States has preferred the formation of democratic governments in republican form, in other words, governments that resembled the U.S. government. In agreements with other countries, the United States has insisted on provisions that conformed to and extended U.S. basic law and principles. In relations with Mexico, and with all other countries, concern for the population has disguised the fundamental economic interest. At its root, economic development rises from population growth and development. For the United States, the value of Mexican development was an increased opportunity for U.S. economic activity and involvement. In the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Mexican development relied on foreign capital in both the primary sector of extractive industries and the secondary sector of industrial expansion. The United States and other countries attempted to consolidate foreign capital reliance into dependence, so that foreign citizens and companies could maintain their economic positions with assurance of stability. Democratic institutions in Europe and North American had discovered the ideological

flexibility and rationale to characterize industrial development as the engine of democracy. The United States and other countries economic interest was to ensure that the established economic system of relationships became permanent.

The competing factions in Mexico represented different population segments with divergent interests. Alliances developed between factions when no single faction could generate enough support to dominate. The alliances fractured as soon as one faction saw the means to dominate militarily. But dominance disintegrated when lack of political acumen prevented effective government. In such a condition of uncertainty, foreign governments could hardly establish private diplomatic relations that were anything less than frustrating. The United States' interest in Mexico was greater than that of other countries because of their extensive shared border and because of the history of cultural and economic osmosis along that border. The economic, social and cultural establishments and institutions that endured during the revolution offered the only opportunity for stable relationships. Although they would be informal, the relationships could be developed and solidified. They could also be used to determine the character of formal diplomatic relations once a national government consolidated. The private economic interest of U.S. citizens and its benefits to the United States were the major goals, which, in the U.S. view, could be and were tied to Mexican national welfare. They were at risk, however, with unrest and instability at its border. Because of such political uncertainty, the United States government became an external faction through the direct social means of public diplomacy.

IV

The remainder of this book is a detailed examination of what this chapter has introduced very briefly and generally. Chapter 2 shows the Mexico situation in greater depth so that the reader can see the challenge that faced the United States government in its relations there. The political situation was chaotic. For practical reasons of national interest, the U.S. government wanted to avoid actual involvement and not just the appearance of involvement. At the same time, the United States had to protect against military threats in the newly added southwestern states and secure private economic interests in commerce and trade that were important sources of private and national wealth. The U.S. government avoided recognizing any faction as the government of Mexico because the outcome of the revolution was so uncertain. They did not want to find themselves in the awkward and inconvenient position of having recognized a faction that would not prevail,

to the detriment of relations with the faction that would prevail. Yet, the United States government could not ignore their adjacent neighbor, the populous and resource-rich country with which it had a history of contentious relations. They had to maintain some sort of diplomatic relations. The challenges concerned what sort of relations and by what methods to maintain them in a context of internal revolutionary turmoil and external multinational belligerence.

The economic interests of the United States in Mexico were private. Public interest derived from the benefits to the U.S. national economy from returns on investments by private citizens and organizations through commerce, trade and dividends. Certainly, the U.S. citizens and organizations co-operated with their own government in looking after their interests. To some extent, the commercial, trade and investment relations affected Mexican public attitudes. But the affected segments tended to be those that had held sway with the pre-revolutionary government. The U.S. government did not and could not own or control and public communications media in Mexico, nor did any U.S. citizens or organizations. Chapter 3 discusses U.S. government efforts to exert direct control or influence on the Mexican press while cloaking any appearance of official involvement. Private commercial relations were one mechanism for influence. The U.S. government was prepared to extend financial support in exchange for sympathetic editorial treatment. But to avoid the appearance of blatant propaganda, any support had to be completely hidden. Mexican editors and publishers, although sensitive to financial incentives, tended toward strong pride in their independence and freedom from influence. In some cases, efforts to influence them backfired. Publications became anti-United States or more strongly so. Therefore, the U.S. attempt at direct influence was unrealistic, though it was a prelude giving impetus to the development of public diplomacy.

Chapter 4 covers the various objectives and practices in public diplomacy. With each communication effort aimed at Mexico, the U.S. goals differed from all other efforts. In any multi-channeled campaign, the medium and even the vehicles utilized will determine effective content. Similarly, in a multi-targeted campaign, the characteristics of the target will determine both effective media and effective content. Each medium and target requires a strategy and tactics different from others. The entire communication effort, however, must have an overall strategy in which the various targets and media are tactical executions. The overall strategy, just as the subsidiary strategies, must have a clearly defined objective for evaluating tactical effectiveness. Within the United States government, administrative turf battles hindered and prevented strategic integration.

Objectives and practices within the public diplomacy campaign were largely piecemeal. Discussion within the administration identified segments to target and others to ignore. Media that would reach the targets were appropriately selected from what was available and attractive to the target. But clear goals and methods for evaluation were unspecified. Personal impressions and anecdotes formed the base for determining communication effects. Although specific efforts may have produced positive effects, the complete campaign taken altogether lacked cohesion. The various components did not reinforce each other.

The United States government repeated in other countries the steps that they took in Mexico. All were either directly involved in the European war or crucial to U.S. aims regarding the conflict. But as discussed in Chapter 5, the government also had goals for the entire western hemisphere to be achieved through public diplomacy. Although the United States did not follow through on that intention because of changing political priorities, the idea forecast the practice of country branding that has emerged since. The intention was to create through public communication a concept of the United States in the minds of other American publics the was highly favorable to the targeted American publics and, therefore, also favorable to the United States. The intention appears to be the essence of propaganda. Definitions may differ only slightly, but generally a message is propaganda when the sender fails to substantiate it. The communicator must back it up. With substantiation, it can be advertising, which is definitely in the interest of the sender, but also in the genuine interest of the receiver. The image that the United States had created through formal, traditional diplomacy was substantially antithetical to the image or concept the government wanted to propagate. The two communication approaches must be consistent if public diplomacy is to achieve the positive effect of concept acceptance among the target publics. Because the United States government had a crucial strategic interest in Mexico, and because they had already begun a public communication there, they unveiled the new hemispheric U.S. concept to Mexico first.

Chapter 6 discusses the response to the image that the United States government intended to project. In terms of social science research, the public diplomacy campaign was a social intervention. Usually, a social intervention expects a desired outcome manifest in an alteration of the social circumstances that motivated the intervention. Whether and to what extent the outcome occurs has led to the development of increasingly sophisticated research methodologies. In the early 20th century, most measurement methodologies were unavailable. A common assumption was that a media message would achieve the intended effect. Anecdotal rather than

systematically accumulated evidence supported the assumption. Certain modes of communication are likely to produce some effect. Other activities intended to have indirect effects may also enjoy some success. In this earliest of efforts, the desired outcomes were not specific enough for the application of accurate measurement methodology, had it been available. The results were impressionistic but may have occurred. Even with the sophisticated methodologies that researchers have developed in the century since this public diplomacy campaign, questions remain concerning the timing and degree of observed effects. The evaluation of this social intervention relies on inference from incomplete, unsystematic and impressionistic data. However, the data still may still offer an acceptable degree of validity. If the intention of the United States government was to generate a predisposition in the Mexican public to respond positively toward the image of the United States, the data may be suitable for evaluation of the communication objective.

Relations among countries are practical matters rather than images. Traditional roles define them. Countries can be allies, adversaries, partners or neutrals, for example. Within that set, they can be equal, inferior, superior or irrelevant. The perception of a country toward itself may or may not coincide with the perception toward it from other countries. Chapter 7 concerns the perceptions of Mexico and the United States toward each other as revealed in official diplomatic interchanges and internal communications. This is the key area in which agreement or conflict may arise, not only between governments but also between the public and private assertions of national identities and images. Ordinarily, a government will be aware of both private and public assertions from another government, whereas the public, if the communication campaign has succeeded, will be aware only of the public assertions. A substantial divergence between private and public diplomacy efforts can greatly frustrate the receiving government in its internal relations. Internal public attitudes in Mexico toward the United States could hamper the flexibility of and even support for the Mexican government in its external relations. In fact, such an effect was the purpose of the United States government in public diplomacy. But as the Mexican government approached consolidation – a seemingly stable government was years away – they had to assert a national identity and image of their own that included flexibility in order to generate widespread support.

Chapter 8 covers the Mexican response to the divergence of private and public diplomacy. Official diplomatic communication traditionally takes place in secret with only general content revealed to the public, if even that much. Such was the expectation of the U.S. State Department in their official communications with the faction they ultimately recognized in

Mexico. The State Department also had a voice in the public communication campaign, but not the only voice. Within the newly recognized Mexican government, the organization or disorganization of the U.S. government did not matter. In their perception, all communication from the United States originated from a single source regardless of which department or person was ultimately responsible. Public diplomacy was a departure from traditional practice without international understandings concerning its conduct and responses. Because the U.S. government was initiating an innovative approach to international communication, the Mexican government responded with an innovative approach, which was to reveal certain private diplomacy to the public. As a break with longstanding tradition and understanding, this small act was revolutionary. It turned the table on the United States. Whereas the public diplomacy effort intended to limit the flexibility and independence of the Mexican government in executing their policies, the public revelation of a private diplomatic message constrained the flexibility and independence of the U.S. government in executing their policies.

The effects of the U.S. communication efforts are the topic of Chapter 9. As mentioned previously in this introduction, measurement methods for evaluating social interventions were still primitive compared to those developed even 25 years later. The more sophisticated studies do, however, establish a basis for inference. Similar communication tactics tend to produce similar results. Successful later campaigns also offer communication attributes for comparison to the campaign executed in Mexico. Claims from those responsible for the public diplomacy campaign may have carried a strong tint of personal involvement. As mentioned before, political wrangling and turf battles within the U.S. government had the capacity to hinder the public diplomacy efforts as much as or even more than the divergent private diplomacy through traditional channels. But self-interested reports may not warrant complete discount of the claims. If later campaign effects appear based on reliable, systematic research, then conclusions concerning this innovative campaign may be validated. A usual evaluation standard is whether the social intervention effected the intended outcome. That standard is considered here, although much of the evidence must be speculative inference. Another standard here is whether the campaign had an effect opposite to the intended outcome, which is also considered. From a detached perspective, the campaign was successful if the communicator, the U.S. government, used it to develop a sophisticated approach to public diplomacy based on prior failure as well as success.

CHAPTER TWO

SITUATION

I

Even before the arrival of Spanish conquistadors, various groups had dominated the area that is now Mexico. Rivalry among the original inhabitants brought changes in authority to local societies. Myths, religious practices and cultural symbols replaced prior norms, often without greatly affecting the ordinary lives of the resident populations, who smashed their former gods and formed new figures for worship. These early changes came about through the migrations of competing and conflicting societies of original inhabitants similar to the migrations and conflicts between societies on other continents. Arrival of the conquistadors brought much greater change. The differences between the new arrivals and the original inhabitants were much greater than those between the various societies of original inhabitants. The new authority extended grants to individuals of foreign origin to carry out substantial social change among the local people through Christianization and other efforts. Whether those who held such grants executed them as intended became a source of conflict in which self-interest prevailed among grant holders. Others among the conquistadors who did not hold grants became frustrated with the overbearing policies of the Spanish monarchy that governed them. Ideas of the Enlightenment were spreading through Europe, including Spain, and throughout the Americas, including Mexico. In a series of wars, most Spanish areas secured independence while retaining Spanish institutions. Mexican independence somewhat resembled the pre-conquest situation of various groups vying for, achieving, and losing dominance. The instability allowed for a French intervention in the mid-19th century that was also short-lived. In the latter part of the century, a figure gained enough to dominance to create an appearance of stability. A period of development ensued, but it was restricted to entrenched interests, which excluded many and frustrated the ambitions of a middle class. Revolution again erupted in 1910.

The original objective of the revolution was to extend economic and political access to those who had been excluded and who constituted a

growing and increasingly frustrated middle class. In that aspect, it was similar to some European conflicts in which growing merchant and commercial classes challenged the entrenched classes rigid, archaic social structures. At first, the formal political, economic and even religious institutions remained unchallenged. Access to influential positions within the institutions was the initial purpose. The revolution was successful in removing the traditionally privileged from their positions. But jealous of their lost power, reactionaries assassinated the first leader and captured power once again. Their success was brief. Once again, the old guard were ejected. Meanwhile, among the opposing factions, revolutionary goals had expanded into demolishing the institutions that had perpetuated the overthrown class dominance. Ever since the conquest, Mexico had comprised two clearly distinct political and economic systems, the original pre-conquest system and the Spanish post-conquest system. Additional different classes had emerged during the ensuing centuries. Although they could agree on the demolition of the old institutions that had bases on the colonial past, they stridently disagreed on the institutional forms that would replace them. The alliances established to eradicate the former government collapsed once they accomplished their common goal.

Factional goals reflected social divergences. The shared heritage of the original inhabitants determined the expectations of large and now militarily powerful population segments that had always been shunted to the margin. When useful to the dominant descendants of the conquistadors, the productivity of the original peoples had value. Otherwise, they and their productivity were irrelevant and immaterial. They were left to fend for themselves, excluded from whatever wealth the country may have had. Because of their heritage, their views of government were unsuitable for a post-colonial country economically dominated by what was still a foreign culture to them. At first, they were unable to execute the revolution on their own. But neither were the descendants of conquistadors who were divided into the entrenched interests and those who had been excluded from those interests, two groups that had shared a heritage unequally. The latter sub-group saw an advantage in an alliance with the descendants of the originals. Together, they defeated the entrenched interests. Then they turned on each other. The originals, the peasant armies, captured the capital city and presidential palace for complete domination. They failed to consolidate their position, however, because they had no plan for governing or a practical view of government. Their former allies, those of Spanish descent, returned to drive out the peasant armies and acquire a tenuous control. From this position, they began to create a constitution that would secure a form of government with institutions distinct from those left by the colonial system.

The U. S. government was more than a spectator to the Mexican conflict. Eighty years earlier, the United States had taken advantage of Mexican internal conflict and instigated a war of territorial aggrandizement to annex a major portion of Mexican territory. Within the remaining portion, U.S. citizens and commercial organizations held substantial interests, as did citizens and organizations from Europe. The foreign governments wanted to see stability in Mexico so long as it secured the stability of their own nationals' interests. Six years into the revolution, the U.S. government did not see the desired security emergent with any of the factions. Given the shifting political and military dominance, the United States withheld recognition of any factional government because their support might sway opinion against it, because no faction had obtained sufficient popular backing, and because the goals of the viable factions were averse to the interests of important U.S. nationals. The very institutions that revolutionaries wanted to abolish or modify had operated to the advantage of foreign interests. The leader of the Constitutionalist party, Venustiano Carranza, appeared as most likely to prevail. But the stated principles of the as yet unwritten constitution were inimical to U.S. interests in many ways. The United States welcomed change that did not affect the interests of U.S. nationals, and the plans of Carranza's Constitutionalists went beyond such changes to claim greater Mexican ownership and control of Mexican resources.

The political wrangling and military confrontations in Mexico showed the divergence, disparity, and distinction that were characteristic of the entire population. Regional differences contributed to the disagreements. As long as any faction perceived a possibility of improving its national position and status, it withheld actual co-operation despite rhetorical expression to the contrary. Alliances shifted among the factions out of opportunism rather than national interest. Factions allied when they perceived that furtherance of their own goals would result. That the goals of allies might ultimately diverge was irrelevant. The United States government unrealistically hoped for a coalition among the faction leaders. Although some leaders may have been predisposed to co-operate, their supporters wanted clear dominance. Calls for co-operation tended to come from those who were at a disadvantage in the struggles. Such a faction, upon gaining sufficient advantage, ceased calls for co-operation. The U.S. government attempted to bring the leaders together under a broad agreement, hoping for a single leader other than one of the faction leaders. But the U.S. government clearly leaned toward the Mexican leaders who would establish a government closely resembling the U.S. government in form and structure. Those were the leaders of the middle-class factions, with policies that would be

amenable to the U.S. middle-class prosperity as well as their own. Other factions, especially the peasant factions, felt betrayed that the United States neglected to consider them seriously. The U.S. government had only exacerbated the fragmented Mexican situation.

The United States government misinterpreted the alliance between the Constitutionalist party and the peasant armies, believing the alliance to be a political as well as a military coalition. Because of the misinterpretation, the U.S. did not treat the peasant leaders as worthy of consideration for national leadership. The U.S. assumed that the Constitutionalists adequately represented peasant interests as well as middle-class interests. The assumption was false. The peasant leaders, Emiliano Zapata in the south and Francisco "Pancho" Villa in the north, considered themselves betrayed by the U.S. government. In the north, Villa was well situated to cause trouble for the United States. The border states of Arizona and New Mexico, which had been granted statehood barely four years before, were part of the original Mexican territory that the United States had appropriated in the Mexican war. Strong cultural economic ties antedating the war still endured. To the residents of that area, the international border was meaningless. Villa himself would cross into New Mexico for diversion and relaxation. But with his betrayal by the U.S. government, Villa made a statement about the trouble he could cause. In early March 1916, his forces raided the small town of Columbus, New Mexico a few miles north of the Mexican border town of Las Palomas. If a New Mexico band had raided Columbus, or if Villa had raided Las Palomas, the incident might have become merely a legendary episode in local history. But this was a belligerent international incursion, the first since the War of 1812, that offended the territorial sovereignty and national dignity of the United States of America.

The response of the United States was to put on a show of military might. The raid on Columbus may have been undiplomatic. But it had been executed by someone whom the U.S. government did not recognize as having any national political authority in Mexico. The U.S. did not recognize anyone else as having national political authority, either. Therefore, a diplomatic response in the sense of a communication between governments was impossible. Attempted communication directly with Villa would have enhanced and legitimated his claim to national leadership, which the U.S. wanted to avoid. The chosen response was to be a decisive and clear punitive military expedition against Villa and his forces restricted to northern Mexico where Villa operated freely. Although the U.S. government had requested from Carranza permission to enter Mexican territory, the Mexican leader had not responded. The invasion comprised a force of 6,000 penetrating deep into Mexican territory rather than a limited border area. Led by General

John Pershing, the forces sought to find Villa and his forces and take retaliatory action against them. The execution of the plan had a strong element unrelated to any military objective. The expedition was more of an effort in public communication than in well-grounded military action. In one way, it was successful. It showed that the United States could militarily enter Mexican territory with impunity just as Villa had done in U.S. territory. That much would have been clear to Villa and all the other Mexican factions and partisans. With the public display, however, the U.S. expected to demonstrate nationally and internationally the consequences of such audacious belligerence toward the United States.

The display failed disastrously. Historically, the United States government had considered any Latin American leader who did not endorse and submit to U.S. interests to be wayward, petulant and foolish. Since the Monroe Doctrine, the United States had considered itself sovereign in the entire western hemisphere. In response to any challenge to that position within the hemisphere, the U.S. might attempt to soothe, conciliate and coax. If such efforts failed, the U.S. would resort to military action for teaching the challenger a lesson. Otherwise, the hemisphere would view the U.S. with contempt. Villa's raid showed such contempt. The U.S. had to teach him a lesson visible to the hemisphere. The plan was doomed. To say that the Mexico-U.S. border was porous is an understatement. It only appeared on maps. General Pershing could enter Mexico unchallenged just as Villa had entered New Mexico. But 6,000 troops with horses, wagons, motorcycles and other support equipment would have been difficult to conceal even if Pershing had wanted to do that. Further, he was in unfamiliar territory. Villa was in his own territory that offers many opportunities for concealment to those who know it. All the general's horses and all the general's men couldn't find Villa or his army. Traditional assessments hold that guerilla tactics frustrated the U.S. forces, which version puts the U.S. in the most favorable light possible. Villa's forces may deliberately have left enough tracks to encourage the U.S. forces in their pursuit and to keep them searching in Mexico. The Mexicans may well have been in the United States, which also offers many opportunities for concealment in the area adjacent to Mexico. Villa himself may have been enjoying himself at a popular resort less than 100 miles from Columbus. Wherever they were, the Mexicans publicly embarrassed Pershing, handing the him the public contempt he had come to eliminate and claiming for themselves the reputation of serious challengers to U.S. dominance.

II

The Constitutionalist party had allied itself with the military strength of the peasant armies. Villa was an important general. When the alliance had established dominance, the peasant armies, disagreeing with Carranza and realizing their military strength, broke the alliance and took control of the capital on their own, driving out the Constitutionalists. But because they had no substantial plan beyond taking the capital, the peasant armies fell into disarray while the Constitutionalists, with Carranza remaining at their head, organized and strengthened themselves. Ultimately, the Constitutionalists achieved a sufficient degree of military superiority on their own to displace the peasant armies from the capital and claim control of a national government. In the United States, the administration of President Woodrow Wilson hoped that the military supremacy that backed Carranza would translate into more orderly national conditions rather than a mere nominal position. The orderly conditions the United States envisioned included adherence to the principles of capitalism. In other words, they wanted to see Carranza maintain the status quo regarding the economic interests of U.S. citizens and organizations. The Wilson administration also wanted Carranza to resist any overtures from Europe, specifically Germany, intending an alliance. Since the statement of the Monroe Doctrine in 1823, the United States had wanted to keep the Americas American with the U.S. as guarantor. In the context of the European war, the administration wanted to keep the war in Europe and not have it become an American war as well, even if that part of the war were confined to the Americas.

Other than economic interest of its citizens and organization, the United States government would have had little concern about the affairs of Mexico. European countries also had economic ties to Mexico, which were also private, that did not interfere with private U.S. interests. In fact, they involved some co-operation. Although several countries exerted economic influence, none exerted direct or indirect political or military influence. Of course, the arms used by the various Mexican factions tended to come from abroad. But transactions came through intermediaries whose concern was business and not politics or a specific outcome of the revolution. The war in Europe kept the countries there occupied and little able to interfere directly in the revolution. The United States had kept out of both the European war and the Mexican revolution. Increasingly, however, the U.S. was leaning toward supporting allied forces against Germany, which had recently committed to unlimited submarine warfare. Still, Germany looked for a way to keep the United States out of the European war, and saw in Mexico a promising strategy. Co-operation between Germany and Mexico could keep

U.S. attention turned toward the south rather than to the east. Besides the economic security of private U.S. citizens and organizations, then, the Wilson administration wanted to insure military and territorial security along the southern border. In relations with Mexico, the primary regulator of U.S. conduct was counteracting German influence to maintain a better relation with Mexico that would appeal to them more than improved relations with Germany.

The United States government, and Secretary of State Lansing in particular, was aware that Germany was trying to use the Mexican Revolution strategically in their interest to keep the United States occupied and disinclined to join the war in Europe. The punitive expedition that General Pershing had made into Mexico encouraged Germany to utilize Mexican turmoil to Germany's advantage against the U.S. The expedition, as communication, had told not only Mexico but Germany and all other countries as well that the United States would strongly intervene militarily in Mexico under relatively minor circumstances. To send a force of 6,000 under the command of an important senior officer to retaliate for a brief incursion against a small border town clearly was not a measured response. The turmoil of the Mexican revolution threatened U.S. interests that were much greater. A reasonable conclusion was that the U.S. government was on the verge of much greater intervention. Continued turmoil was a continuing threat to interests that the U.S. government wanted to secure. The threat was much greater any possible hemispheric contempt for failure to retaliate in response to the raid on Columbus, New Mexico. In the course of the revolution, the U.S. government greatly desired that one particular faction should dominate so that the result would be reduction in turmoil. Then, the U.S. could at least count on stable circumstances under which to press their interests. But Germany sought to act as a catalyst toward U.S. intervention by fostering the turmoil that entailed disruptions between the U.S. and Mexico in their economic, political and diplomatic relations.

The factions in Mexico were not competing only to continue turmoil, however. Each wanted the turmoil to end and stability to emerge, but each on its own terms. The aim of Germany to foster turmoil and instability, then, was at odds with the desires of both the United States and Mexico. If Germany could not achieve prolonged internal turmoil and instability in Mexico, they would work to undermine relations with the United States. The historical relations between the two North American countries were often abrasive and belligerent. Either government needed little provocation for igniting confrontational relations that were not even remotely cordial. They tended to view each other with latent aggression. In the event that the U.S. government did recognize diplomatically any single faction as the

legitimate Mexican government, Germany intended to stoke the coals of latent aggression into overt aggression and bring about conflict rather than co-operation. Germany wanted to increase frustration between the U.S. government and whichever Mexican government they might recognize to the point where military confrontation would erupt. In brief, the German goal was U.S. military intervention in Mexico. Whether the cause was prolonged internal turmoil and instability, or frustration with perceived stubbornness and obstinacy of a Mexican government, intervention was the German goal regardless of the instigation. Germany was convinced that the U.S. military could intervene in Europe or in Mexico but not both. German interest was the keep the United States out of the European war. Therefore, they promoted Mexican war.

The circumstances were difficult for U.S. Secretary of State Lansing and presented him with strongly countervailing considerations. If he decided that the United States intervene militarily in Mexico, he might succeed in uniting the opposing factions, but united against the United States and with the support of Germany. If decided against intervention, the turmoil might continue indefinitely, again with the complicity of Germany. Much of the everyday economic activity continued in Mexico, but under conditions that were volatile and unpredictable. Intervention could not guarantee stable conditions. If the United States recognized one faction as dominant, Germany would act to the detriment of the relations between that faction and the U.S. government. Within the United States, Lansing faced criticism from Congress, the press and the public, who interpreted avoiding intervention, or even failure to recognize any one Mexican faction, as doing nothing. Given the equally undesirable consequences of any proposed action, Lansing took a position that the United States not intervene, not recognize one faction as dominant, and avoid a quarrel no matter how great the domestic criticism. Further, the continuing cross-border economic activity did give Mexican factions some incentive to maintain relations that were tolerable to both governments. The purpose of intervention would have been to improve the situation for the United States. But the more likely outcome would have been to damage the situation. Lansing saw little immediate expectation of improvement, so he sought to avoid damage.

III

General Carranza, as he was called in U.S. government internal messages, had fundamental antagonism toward the United States because of the Monroe Doctrine. In that doctrine, the U.S. had declared itself to be the lord protector of all the western hemisphere except for those territories

undisputedly under the dominions of certain European countries. In other words, no country other than the United States could attempt to aggrandize its western hemisphere territory without a military challenge from the U.S. From the U.S. point of view, the doctrine was advantageous to all western hemisphere countries because they could count on the military capability of the United States for their territorial security. Although that point of view may have been valid in fact, Carranza and other leaders in the hemisphere objected to it because it had been a unilateral declaration from the United States. No other country had been consulted. Regardless of whether any of them would have welcomed loss of territory from aggrandizement of European territory, other hemispheric leaders expected consultation as a show of recognition and respect for their national sovereignty. In effect, the United States had guaranteed their territorial integrity while undermining their sovereignty. Carranza and other hemispheric leaders did not want trade one for the other. They wanted both to be equally secure and respected, even explicitly among themselves. With German interference, many in the United States invoked the Monroe Doctrine. But Carranza rejected the doctrine because of its implications for Mexican sovereignty and not because of any sympathy toward Germany or acquiescence to German interference.

The recent U.S. military incursion into Mexico led by General Pershing had confirmed and strengthened Carranza's opposition to the Monroe Doctrine. It had clearly communicated the position that the United States claimed free rein to act militarily in Mexico. Other actions in the hemisphere had demonstrated the same free rein for military action elsewhere in the hemisphere. Concerning the communication effects of the military actions, rather than eliminating contempt for the U.S., the actions had justified and reinforced contempt. The U.S. government referred to Pershing's expedition and punitive because it was ostensibly directed at General Villa in response to his raid on Columbus, New Mexico. But the raid had been against a single, small town barely across the international border. Although the raid devasted the town, the impact was isolated to the town without affecting the rest of the county, much less the State of New Mexico, and certainly not the United States of America. To Carranza, the military incursion led by Pershing reinforced his contempt for the colossal arrogance that the United States had historically shown under the Monroe Doctrine. The very threats that the doctrine claimed to prevent from European nations were carried out by the country that had espoused security against the threats. If Villa's raid had been impulsive and inexcusable, Pershing's expedition had been deliberately calculated and, therefore, far less excusable. Just as the U.S. government had justified the expedition as a response to an attack on U.S. sovereign territory not isolated to Columbus, Carranza condemned the

expedition as an attack on Mexican sovereign territory not isolated to punitive action against Villa.

Underlying all relations between Mexico and the United States was this history of antagonism, animosity and adversity so strong that it had become the very fibers that wove the national identities of both countries. A change in this foundation would have required an international revolution to achieve institutional compatibility. As relations stood, each perceived the other as the source of conflicting interests, either country placed culpability on the other, and either placed responsibility on the other for eliminating the source. Yet economic, social and cultural bonds compelled efforts at co-operative, if not cordial, relations. In the United States, many citizens nurtured strong sympathy with Mexico just as in Mexico, many citizens nurtured strong sympathy with the United States. The third actor in the diplomatic triangle was Germany, which wanted to fracture any budding relationship between Mexico and the United States for the purpose of developing and strengthening a its own relationship with Mexico. The German purpose was not the benefit of Mexico, even though their benefit might be an incidental consequence. The actual purpose was to damage the United States. Mexico was not even a strategic tool but merely a tactical tool. Toward that end, Germany attempted to highlight and emphasize the antagonistic history between the North American neighbors, and to veil and dismiss the bonds that committed them to co-operation, no matter how uneasy it might have been. In its own interest, Germany attempted to agitate both of the other two governments to resurrect old hostilities and instigate new conflicts.

Among the officials representing the German government to the United States was one charged with discovering any means of interfering with and damaging U.S. ability to enter the European war. The job was sabotage, a word that, like propaganda, has strongly negative connotations. From the view of those engaging in sabotage, their behavior is a legitimate exercise in achieving conditions favorable to their purpose. The most egregious acts arise when more casual acts fail to bring about the desired conditions. The activities usually stem from official diplomatic rejection of the conditions or from a strongly expected or supposed rejection. Sabotage arises from adversarial interests and latent hostility in an effort to disguise attempts to limit the ability of a host government to act in what it perceives as its own interest. Before the United States entered the European war, Germany sought to sabotage U.S. flexibility by redirecting U.S. international attention to a situation that could be more directly threatening to the U.S. Bounded by the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, the United States was geographically isolated from international military threats by land except from within the western hemisphere. Only two countries were geographically situated to

make land-based threats. To the north, Canada shared strong cultural, political and economic ties with the United States. A threat from them was hardly likely. To the south, Mexico defined itself to a great extent by their historic antagonism with the United States that was well known internationally. With much military activity already occurring because of the revolution, and a virtually non-existent border with the United States, Mexico was the only country that the U.S. had to fear. Such was the assessment of the German sabotage officer.

Engaging the United States in a military conflict with Mexico would diminish U.S. flexibility to enter the European conflict. Many U.S. citizens wanted to stay out of the European war. Woodrow Wilson had campaigned for president on his ability to keep the U.S. out of the war. In general, the United States had no appetite for entering the European conflict. The national mood worked in Germany's interest. But the recent decision to engage in unlimited submarine warfare, and the direct consequences to the United States, worked against Germany's interest by creating a change in U.S. public opinion not only for predisposition toward European war involvement but also creating an increasing demand for involvement. With unlimited submarine warfare, Germany appeared to be acting against their own interest by attacking the interests of a non-hostile country. But although the U.S. government was not overtly hostile, it was providing support to countries that were hostile to Germany. In the war, Germany was steadily reducing their adversaries' ability to continue. The cost in men and materiel had been very great. Countries allied against Germany met increasing difficulty in supplying sufficient resources in both men and weaponry. The U.S. could, and ultimately did, tip the balance by providing the resources the allies required. But even without providing men, the U.S. could and did supply weaponry, which Germany sought to disrupt with the submarine campaign. A more effective method, however, would be to put the United States government in such a position that they would not be able to export arms to Europe. An attack from Mexico would create the position. Because of proximity and immediacy of a Mexican attack, public and political opinion would demand a strong response in which, in the view of the German sabotage officer, the U.S. would need all the arms it could produce, thus eliminating European export.

IV

In their own interest, Germany actively attempted to sabotage positive relations between the United States and Mexico. The German aim was to foster overtly hostile relations between the two countries. With Carranza